

## **PHASE I: Strategic Planning Session February 2007**

### **Partnership in Learning and Advocacy for Young Children (PLAY)'s Strategic Planning: Where to From Here? Final Report and Recommendations**

**Facilitated by: Victoria Barr, MHSc  
March 9, 2007**

The following outlines the results of PLAY's strategic planning session, held at the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health from 8:30am – 12 noon on February 27, 2007. A brief description of next steps and recommendations is also provided below.

Approximately 25 people attended the event from a variety of organizations. The session was facilitated by Victoria Barr, with a welcome provided by Enid Elliott. The following agenda was followed:

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 8:30am  | Welcome & Introductions (Enid Elliott)  |
| 9:00am  | Purpose & Context (Enid Elliott / Michele Fryer)  |
| 9:15am  | Guidelines & Safety Agreements  |
| 9:20am  | Priorities as per 2004 Community Plan (Michele Fryer) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• History of PLAY from 2003</li><li>• Review of Community Charter</li></ul> |
| 9:30am  | Walkabout – review achievements to date in 13 priorities<br>Decide on a few priorities to focus on (maximum of 5)   |
| 10:20am | Break   |
| 10:40am | Indicate key gaps & strategies for each high priority item  |
| 11:30am | Next steps – more detailed action plan & evaluation/monitoring plan   |
| 11:45am | Agreements & Closing  |

#### **Goals of the Strategic Planning Session**

Consensus was achieved on the following goals at the beginning of the session:

1. Review accomplishments of PLAY to date.
2. Re-affirm the components of PLAY's Community Charter, including the group's mission, commitments, and beliefs.
3. Come up with a rough strategic plan that includes priorities and preliminary strategies to address those priorities. Duration of the plan will be three years, but the objective is to re-visit each year.
4. Decide on a plan to further clarify/add to rough strategic plan by including an action plan and a performance monitoring plan.

It was also agreed that the broad strategies developed at the session would:

- be consistent with PLAY's 2003 Community Charter;
- will build on past work;
- be responsive to the recommendations and needs of the task groups and local early years groups;
- will contribute to the strength and sustainability of PLAY.

### **Priority Areas, Accomplishments, and Action Items**

During the Strategic Planning Session, all participants were given a copy of the May, 2004 report, Summary of the Coalition Community Plan. This document provided a starting point for the current strategic planning process, because it included a set of guiding principles, four areas of primary interest for the group (physical health and well-being, social competence and emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and community and general knowledge), and a set of standards the Coalition members committed to use when identifying priorities. Most importantly, the Community Plan lists 12 priorities<sup>1</sup>. The February 27, 2007 session reviewed those priorities, identified PLAY's achievements (since 2003/2004) in each priority area, pared down the priority list to 5, and began to identify key action items for each of those new priorities.

When deciding on PLAY's new strategic priorities for the next 3 years, group members were asked to keep the following questions in mind:

- In which areas is PLAY most likely to have success?
- Consider the timing – in which areas is opportunity knocking?
- What does 'best practice' say are the most significant ways to have an impact?
- What priority areas are most do-able, given current resources?

Priority areas were designated using a voting system in which participants indicated their preferences by placing green 'dot' stickers on items posted around the room. The results of that process are listed in Table 1. Items in that table are listed in order of priority, as identified by the group.

Please note that, although five top priority areas were chosen (early learning and child care, parenting education and support, knowledge and awareness of early childhood development, child-friendly workplaces and communities, and neighbourhood cohesion), they were accompanied by a list of three other techniques to achieve those goals (advocacy, partnerships and research).

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<sup>1</sup> During planning for this February 27, 2007 session, one more priority was added, for a total of 13 priorities.

**Table 1: Key Strategic Priorities for PLAY 2007 – 2010**

Priority Area	Achievements Since 2003/2004	Key Ideas for Action	Other Ideas for Action
<b>Goal Areas (WHATs)</b>			
Early Learning and Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formed a task group (in partnership with Regional Childcare Council)</li> <li>Provided 'Hand in Hand' conference - April 2005</li> <li>Completed a regional child care report (powerpoint)</li> <li>Numerous meetings with government, media and the public to advocate</li> <li>Rally at the Legislature</li> <li>Raised profile of early childhood programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocate for a cohesive child care / early learning policy</li> <li>Memorandum of understanding in our region focused on developing an early learning and child care system</li> <li>Keep early learning and child care in the media locally</li> <li>Presentations to large employers to create quality, accessible child care for employees</li> <li>Connections with municipalities: heighten awareness, suggest action - Advocate for new affordable housing with child care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information about 'early literacy' – what are suitable early learning experiences?</li> <li>Work with regional planning to identify/support strategies for spaces for families</li> <li>Persuade governments to look at integrating early learning &amp; child care</li> <li>Communication campaign on child friendly communities</li> <li>Host informal gatherings in coffee shops re: child care – build awareness</li> </ul>
Parenting Education and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formed a task group</li> <li>Focus groups with parents &amp; inventory of parenting education programs</li> <li>Review of written early childhood parenting information in the region – recommendation for use of Invest in Kids material</li> <li>3 months in Island Parent with Invest in Kids material</li> <li>10 best resources for parents – distribution strategy</li> <li>Connections with AFSA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support neighbourhood houses in parenting support</li> <li>An intersectoral, barrier-free parenting education program for all parents (could we do geographic pilot?)</li> <li>Advocacy &amp; support for young families re: daycare issues (especially vulnerable families who do not know how to get supports)</li> <li>Finish brochure &amp; get distributed</li> <li>Provide links to parenting information – tons out there – help get through it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a resource of facilitators – do local training</li> </ul>

Priority Area	Achievements Since 2003/2004	Key Ideas for Action	Other Ideas for Action
Knowledge & Awareness of Early Childhood Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Series of articles in Saanich News</li> <li>• Community &amp; municipal presentations</li> <li>• Posters</li> <li>• Island Parent articles</li> <li>• Task force – ‘hard to reach families’ report</li> <li>• Network with Success by Six</li> <li>• Role of Municipalities report</li> <li>• More knowledge / awareness in school districts</li> <li>• Relationships with HELP &amp; EDI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek funding to hire a PLAY outreach person (with communication background) to package and deliver our messages &amp; to support partnerships &amp; learning</li> <li>• Get funding – grants for broader media campaigns</li> <li>• Presentations to municipal councils with specific recommendations (e.g. zoning for child care, build playgrounds)</li> <li>• Move forward on strategies to engage ‘hard to reach’ families</li> <li>• Develop profiles of young children to demonstrate impact of PLAY (stories from children/parents)</li> <li>• Prepare presentation /communication tools for local communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support &amp; work with Aboriginal networks to promote &amp; encourage their work in culturally appropriate ways</li> <li>• Get a high-profile celebrity spokesperson</li> <li>• Develop a plan to connect with businesses / crown corporations</li> <li>• Connect with teachers, businesses, parents re: collective responsibility</li> <li>• Involvement of media re: advocacy of ECD</li> <li>• Create user-friendly power point on municipal partnerships etc.</li> <li>• Use Alberta’s Syncrude as an example to do the same with forestry</li> <li>• Advocacy of ECD</li> </ul>

Priority Area	Achievements Since 2003/2004	Key Ideas for Action	Other Ideas for Action
Child-Friendly Workplaces & Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation to Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify ideas on how to do this work – work with a municipality as a pilot</li> <li>• Educate businesses on how important early learning &amp; child care are to families, so more families have opportunities to go to work. Employers are having trouble finding qualified employees.</li> <li>• Westshore community: prepare presentations to 5 municipalities about the importance of child-friendly communities for future economic success &amp; health of the area.</li> <li>• In-service speakers for corporations on parent stress</li> <li>• Host a conference on child-friendly communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for more &amp; better natural play spaces</li> <li>• Advocate for more public transportation (e.g Peninsula)</li> </ul>
Neighbourhood Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for local early years groups</li> <li>• Website information for groups</li> <li>• Communication &amp; networking between groups – getting new ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create opportunities for groups to develop in non-active communities</li> <li>• Continue to support local groups</li> <li>• Build partnerships with community groups @housing, supportive environments etc. Make sure needs of families are addressed during planning.</li> <li>• ?clarity needed for this priority area – cohesion of service providers? Or cohesion of families/neighbourhoods?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role of PLAY? (partnerships key here)</li> <li>• Increase engagement with PLAY in neighbourhoods</li> <li>• Identify &amp; support 'Victoria' group at local level</li> <li>• Understand &amp; connect local planning service delivery with provincial funding – coordinated approach</li> </ul>
Priority Area	Achievements Since 2003/2004	Key Ideas for Action	Other Ideas for Action
<b>Techniques to Achieve Goals (HOWs)</b>			
Advocacy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take our advocacy beyond 'preaching to the choir' – advocate with govt. (at all levels) &amp; with business, labour,</li> </ul>	

		<p>professions, media, etc., which, in turn, can lobby with governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy needs fresh attention &amp; commitment</li> <li>• Child-friendly communities have early learning &amp; child care, parenting support &amp; awareness of ECD. How do they accomplish this? Research, partnerships = effective advocacy</li> </ul>	
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success by Six – sharing coordinator, cross membership, providing research information</li> <li>• Cross-sector membership in PLAY -led to many conversations between sectors</li> <li>• Community Council – UEY</li> <li>• Peninsula Connections development</li> <li>• School districts &amp; interagency groups</li> <li>• Aboriginal EC network</li> <li>• Western Community network development</li> <li>• Developing relationships with municipalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipalities – ECD policies</li> <li>• Partnerships with ‘powerful’ ambassadors for ECD (e.g. work with CEOs etc. to advocate for ECD everywhere they go)</li> <li>• Put housing, food security &amp; health care (strategic directions) under partnerships</li> <li>• Partner with public library to support family projects like storytime/outreach programs</li> <li>• Research protocols &amp; partnership agreement templates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement (create) process for agreed informed funding with partners (??)</li> <li>• Partner with Quality of Life Challenge to advocate for child care &amp; child friendly communities</li> <li>• Can we find partnerships in environmental groups who will speak about a liveable planet for our children to grow up in</li> <li>• Meet for lunch once a month to discuss ideas &amp; projects</li> <li>• Integrated services all in one place (library, rec., health etc)</li> <li>• Develop partnerships with groups re: housing, food security, health care</li> <li>• Begin approaching business community</li> </ul>

Priority Area	Achievements Since 2003/2004	Key Ideas for Action	Other Ideas for Action
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping region into 37 neighbourhoods</li> <li>• Census information mapped by NH</li> <li>• EDI from HELP – discussions &amp; forums</li> <li>• UEY – parent interviews, direct assessments, community asset inventory, qualitative info from parents &amp; providers</li> <li>• Municipalities report</li> <li>• Music for Young Children report</li> <li>• Parenting, child care &amp; hard to reach families reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document outcomes with stories of impact on children (maintaining confidentiality)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Create outcomes research &amp; document with partners (&amp; then use for advocacy)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Turn to credit-based stats – instead of 16% vulnerable, why not 84% doing well?</li> <li>• Set targets for action (e.g. # of child care spaces created)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile physical health of young children in Southern Vancouver Island – themes? Factors?</li> </ul>
<b>Other Topic Areas not deemed Top Priority:</b>			
Promotion of Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Books for Babies support</li> <li>• Ready Set Learn support</li> <li>• Library programs support</li> <li>• Support/partner with Invest in Kids</li> <li>• Created opportunities for community planning – Strong Start</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections / partnership with the Greater Victoria Public Library system</li> <li>• Literacy programs for parents</li> <li>• Support family literacy storytime with the public library</li> </ul>
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal report drew connections to housing</li> <li>• Mapping data available</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Become informed</li> <li>• Combine housing/ food security – how poverty contributes to neglect</li> <li>• Combine with child-friendly workplaces &amp; communities</li> <li>• Link poverty/ homeless report to young children</li> </ul>

Priority Area	Achievements Since 2003/2004	Key Ideas for Action	Other Ideas for Action
Safe Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some groundwork in the municipal report</li> <li>Peninsula Connections “Parks &amp; Playspaces” project – map &amp; play days</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support connections with environmental educators – back to nature</li> <li>Involve community planners</li> </ul>
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Success by Six used PLAY information/research to fund community groups/ programs</li> <li>IBM EC education system – Pender Island</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity needed here – communications, not really media</li> <li>Advocacy for our region</li> </ul>
Health Care			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need public health representation – both local &amp; leadership</li> </ul>
Food Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collected &amp; available</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combine with child-friendly workplaces &amp; communities</li> </ul>

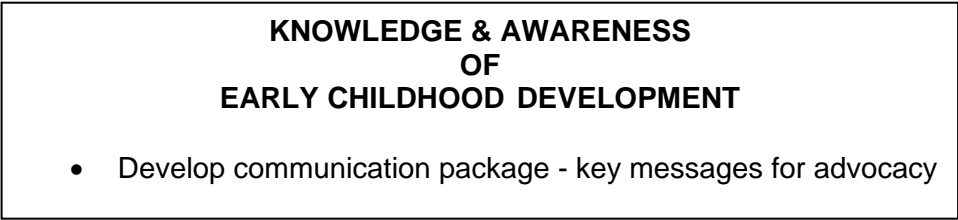
**Next Steps and Recommendations**

The group decided on the following next steps for PLAY in this strategic planning process:

- Circulation of this report (Jan);
- Compile a celebration of successes/achievements (article? Pamphlet?) – to be discussed by the Leadership Group at their next meeting;
- Get feedback about the content of this report from PLAY members (Leadership group).

The February 27, 2007 session was a good first step in deciding on strategic priorities and a rough action plan for PLAY. In the next phase (hopefully soon to take advantage of the momentum of PLAY members), it will be important for the leadership group to clarify, make more concrete and further pare down the strategies suggested above. After that, it would be helpful to turn those ideas into concrete action plans – so they can become a reality, especially if they require funding to get off the ground.

**PHASE II: Establishing Priorities**  
**March 2007**



**PRIORITIES of PLAY**



- 1. Child Care Conference Networks
- 2. Municipal Planning Day



- 1. Brochure
- 2. Articles with Sby6
- 3. Invest in Kids Books



- 1. Support local
- 2. Strengthen School Links
- 3. Promote local Planning/activities in ECD

**Proposed funds to support priority activities of PLAY:**

- Chairperson
- Outreach person for Neighbourhood cohesion
- Early learning and care activities (to be defined by regional child care council)
- Communication tool kit with key messages for advocacy
- Brochure completion, printing
- Uey amendments (possible)

**PHASE III: Operational Plan 2007-08**  
**May 2007**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Costing</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Leadership position of PLAY	<p>Previous position was held by Michele Fryer of VIHA for 5 years. VIHA provided Michele's time as an in kind contribution to support the strategic development and related activities of the coalition.</p> <p>Remuneration for .5 position for Leadership Chair.            Relationships with partners to be maintained and developed as identified in local communities which will provide information and support to build on local capacity.</p>	.5 position to be determined based on the representative selected.	Fall 2007 to commence
Early Learning & Care	<p>Develop a Business Plan (Feasibility Study) on Regional needs and solutions specific to current child care spaces, academic and ongoing professional training, based on the local research of UEY and Child Care Report of PLAY.</p> <p>Upon completion of plan, coordinate presentation to regional community/businesses.</p>	\$5,000.	Completed by September 07
Strengthening Municipal Connections (Design Charrette)	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Cooperative placement of Political Science Student of UVIC to work with specific municipalities and communities based on recommendations from original Municipal Report of PLAY (dec.2006)</p> <p>Use child care reports and business plan to host a municipal forum (design charrette) to bring cross-sectoral representatives together to identify solutions for child care.</p>	<p>UVIC - Success by6 - \$3500            PLAY - \$3500</p> <p>In-kind costs of hosting one day forum.</p>	Fall/Winter 2007
Advocacy	<p>Develop Communication Tool Kit including:            Parent Brochure 'Places to Visit'            Business Presentation            Key messages for politicians</p>	<p>\$5,000 Development of tool kit.            Sby6 granted funds for this strategy</p> <p>\$2,000. for printing.</p>	September 2007 To be available to general community
			Implementation

Parenting Education and Support (To provide a universal, coordinated delivery of parenting education and support.)	Information to be gathered on Triple P (Positive Parenting Program from Australia) and how this might be used as a universal program across the region for service providers working with parents.		Coordinator of VIHA to be invited to share information of the Program at an open community meeting in June.
Information and Outreach to Business/Employers	Educate business on importance of early years Presentations to large employers on issues facing families including child care and parental stress in workplace. Use communication toolkit and Success by 6 as vehicles to this outreach.	In kind contributions of Success by 6 members who are delivering this message in their workplace and community.	On-going
Local Research	UEY: Community Reports Maps Atlas Document stories PIDACS Asset inventory Create outcome research	UEY budget	Fall of 2008
Support Attendance/participation of Coalition Members to Conferences and Workshops	Continue to provide information, networking opportunities for coalition members to attend relevant conferences, training and networking opportunities to extend knowledge network within PLAY	\$3,000.	
Website Maintenance	Training and transition to an internal Content Management System to allow up to 10 members of PLAY to managed local information on the website including network information, news and events, UEY research progress, etc. The CMS will reduce annual website costs and provide more local opportunities for updated information on website.	To be determined	Training commences in June 2007  Website revisions ongoing